

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

*Please amend the claims as follows:*

1. (Currently Amended) A fuel cell system comprising:

a fuel cell which generates electric power from a fuel gas and an oxidizing agent gas;

a fuel gas supplying means which supplies the fuel gas to an anode side of the fuel cell;

an oxidizing agent gas supplying means which supplies the oxidizing agent gas to a

cathode side of the fuel cell;

a raw material gas supplying means which supplies a raw material gas to be used in the production of the fuel gas; and

a control means which controls the fuel gas supplying means, the oxidizing agent gas supplying means and the raw material gas supplying means such that during the starting of electricity generation of the fuel cell, the raw material gas supplying means purges at least the cathode side with the raw material gas, in which a sulfur compound is removed, before the fuel gas supplying means and the oxidizing agent gas supplying means supply the fuel gas and the oxidizing agent gas to the fuel cell, respectively.

2. (Previously Presented) The fuel cell system according to Claim 1, wherein the raw material gas supplying means purges the anode side after purging the cathode side.

3. (Previously Presented) The fuel cell system according to Claim 1 or 2, further comprising:

a fuel gas pipe disposed between the fuel gas supplying means and the anode side;

a fuel gas on-off valve disposed along the fuel gas pipe;

an oxidizing agent gas pipe disposed between the oxidizing agent gas supplying means and the cathode side;

an oxidizing agent gas on-off valve disposed along the oxidizing agent gas pipe;

a raw material gas pipe connected to the raw material gas supplying means and a part of the oxidizing agent gas pipe disposed between the oxidizing agent gas on-off valve and the cathode side; and

a raw material gas on-off valve disposed along the raw material gas pipe.

4. (Previously Presented) The fuel cell system according to Claim 3, further comprising:

a cathode side exhaust pipe through which an off-gas discharged from the cathode side is discharged; and

a cathode side off-gas on-off valve disposed along the cathode side exhaust pipe,

wherein the purge is carried out by opening the cathode side off-gas on-off valve, opening the raw material gas on-off valve for a predetermined period of time and then closing the raw material gas on-off valve.

5. (Previously Presented) The fuel cell system according to Claim 4, further comprising:

an additional raw material gas pipe connected to the raw material gas supplying means and a part of the fuel gas pipe disposed between the fuel gas on-off valve and the anode side;

an additional raw material gas on-off valve disposed along the additional raw material gas pipe;

an anode side exhaust pipe through which an off-gas discharged from the anode side is discharged; and

an anode side off-gas on-off valve disposed along the anode side exhaust pipe, wherein the purge is carried out by opening the raw material gas on-off valve, opening the anode side off-gas on-off valve, and then opening the additional raw material gas on-off valve for a predetermined period of time.

6. (Previously presented) The fuel cell system according to Claim 5, wherein the operation of the fuel gas supplying means and the oxidizing agent gas supplying means of supplying the fuel gas and the oxidizing agent gas to the fuel cell is carried out by opening the anode side off-gas on-off valve, opening the fuel gas on-off valve, opening the cathode side off-gas on-off valve, and then opening the oxidizing agent gas on-off valve.

7. (Currently amended) A method of starting a fuel cell system comprising a fuel cell which generates electric power from a fuel gas and an oxidizing agent gas, a fuel gas supplying means which supplies the fuel gas to an anode side of the fuel cell, and an oxidizing agent gas supplying means which supplies the oxidizing agent gas to a cathode side of the fuel cell, comprising:

a purging step of purging, during the starting of electricity generation of the fuel cell, at least the cathode side with a raw material gas to be used in the production of the fuel gas, in which a sulfur compound is removed, before the fuel gas and the oxidizing agent gas are supplied to the fuel cell.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of starting a fuel cell system according to Claim 7, wherein the anode side is purged after purging the cathode side.

9. (Previously Presented) A program of computer-controlling the purging step of purging, during the starting of electricity generation of the fuel cell, at least the cathode side with a raw material gas to be used in the production of the fuel gas, before the fuel gas and the oxidizing agent gas are supplied to the fuel cell, in the method of starting a fuel cell system according to Claim 7.

10. (Previously Presented) A recording medium carrying the program according to Claim 9 which can be processed by a computer.

11. (Previously Presented) The fuel cell system according to Claim 1, wherein the raw material gas is a hydrocarbon-based gas to be used by a reformer in the production of the fuel gas.